



## The Weather Whisper

April 2020

### First Tornadoes of 2020 in Iowa—March 28th

*Kenny Padrazik, Meteorologist*

The first tornadoes of 2020 in Iowa occurred on Saturday, March 28th as a strong spring low pressure system quickly ejected out of the Central Rockies and moved through portions of the Midwest. Thunderstorms developed over portions of southwest Iowa during the early afternoon hours along a northward advancing warm front. Scattered storms then raced quickly to the northeast across central and northeastern Iowa. A few of these storms were traveling northeast at around 45-50 mph.

A total of 6 tornadoes developed over portions of central to northeast Iowa in which two of the tornadoes caused EF-1 damage. The first tornado of the day and of 2020 (for Iowa) dropped just south of Fontanelle in Adair County at 1:59 PM and was on the ground for 16 minutes. The second EF-1 tornado developed on the western edge of Oelwein in Fayette County at 6:30 PM. The Fontanelle tornado caused damage to an outbuilding on a farmstead while the Oelwein tornado damaged apartment buildings and trees. The other tornadoes produced very minor damage or occurred in an open farm field and were unable to assign an EF rating. Thus the EF-Unknown rating.

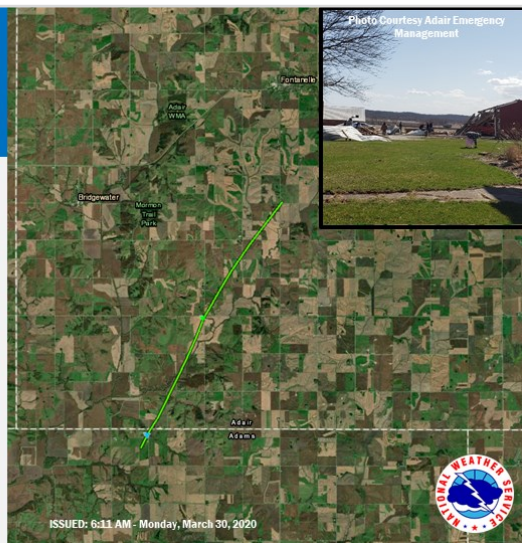
In addition to the tornadoes, pea to half dollar sized hail was reported over portions of central and northern Iowa, which was on the cooler side of the previously mentioned warm front boundary. You can find specific details, photos, track maps on the homepages of:

[NWS La Crosse](#)  
[NWS Des Moines](#)

#### NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION Preliminary Damage Survey Results

##### South of Fontanelle – Adams/Adair

Date	3/28/2020
Time (Local)	1:59 PM – 2:15 PM
EF Rating	EF-1
Est. Peak Winds	95
Path Length	4.5 miles
Max Width	80 yards
Injuries/Deaths	0/0



#### NWS Des Moines

Cover Photo Credit: Gregory Clark

Photo of a brief tornado near Stuart, Iowa on March 28, 2020.



Very low hanging wall cloud near Prairie City, Iowa. Photo courtesy of Jason Blommers.



Tornado south of Hudson, Iowa. Photo courtesy of Tyler Delagardelle via Twitter @Calaport86

## Spotter Spotlight—Ryan Waters

NWS Des Moines recognizes the importance of an active spotter network. Without these volunteers, getting ground truth—whether it be snow or rain totals, severe storms reports, etc.—would be much more challenging and make the job of our meteorologists that much more difficult. This month, we recognize Ryan Waters for consistently providing timely, accurate and useful information benefiting operations.

“Hi, my name is Ryan Waters and I’ve been a registered, trained weather spotter since April 2010. I’ve always had a fascination with weather, particularly with winter/severe weather. As most Midwesterners typically do, I go outside to see what is going on, even when I should be taking shelter.

This led me to enroll at Iowa State University to major in Meteorology with the intent of working for the NWS or NSSL and to storm chase on the side. That dream faded my sophomore year with the introduction to advanced physics and calculus. However, I still live out that dream as a hobby, which is where my role as a spotter comes into play.

After college, I moved to Kansas City for 18 months and started to follow the Chief Meteorologist at the NBC affiliate, Gary Lezak. His research in weather patterns led to the development of the Lezak Recurring Cycle or LRC. It is fascinating to see how the jet stream/atmosphere recycles every 45-60 days after the pattern resets between October 1<sup>st</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup>. His weather blog is definitely worth reading/following.

Thanks to the NWS, COOP observers and all the spotters for their service to our communities!” - Ryan Waters



Left to right: wife Christy, daughter Ella, son Logan, and Ryan.

### Des Moines March Monthly Climate Review

#### March 2020 Temperatures

Highest Temperature	72°F	March 8 <sup>th</sup>	
Lowest Temperature	23°F	March 20 <sup>th</sup>	
Average Temperature	43.9°F	39.3°F	+4.6°F Normal

#### March 2020 Precipitation

		Normal Value	+/- Normal
Total Precipitation	3.53"	2.30"	+1.23"
Total Snowfall	1.0"	5.2"	-4.2"

Des Moines Climate Period of Record began 1878



### Waterloo March Monthly Climate Review

#### March 2020 Temperatures

Highest Temperature	71°F	March 8 <sup>th</sup>	
Lowest Temperature	19°F	March 15 <sup>th</sup>	
Average Temperature	41.2°F	35.8°F	+5.4°F Normal

#### March 2020 Precipitation

		Normal Value	+/- Normal
Total Precipitation	3.00"	2.06"	+0.94"
Total Snowfall	2.2"	4.6"	-2.4"

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[Weather.gov/desmoines](https://www.weather.gov/desmoines)

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